

NO BORDERS

are condemned to live in refugee camps in Lebanon and Jordan as the conflicts in Syria and Iraq widen with no end in sight.

Hundreds of thousands of people are attempting to escape the horrors of war, repression and poverty in Syria, Yemen and Eritrea. Hundreds have drowned in the Mediterranean as they try to reach what they believe is safety in Europe. Even more



WHOSE ST ANN'S? OUR ST ANN'S!

After years of arguments, objections, phoney consultations and, finally, a nod and a wink from Haringey Council earlier this year, Barnet, Haringey and Enfield Mental Health Trust (BHEMHT) now have outline planning permission to build 470 homes on two-thirds of the St. Ann's hospital site.

Over the years, health facilities on the site have been deliberately run down with BHEMHT planning to revamp very limited services in one corner of the site. The remainder could be sold to a private developer who will make millions in profit on former public land.

Protest groups and residents argued long and hard that the NHS had no right to sell the land without first completing a needs assessment of the health requirements of Haringey's 250,000 residents. No need, said BHEMHT, the land is surplus to requirements. So this is what the major political parties mean when they tell us that, "the NHS is safe in our hands"!

All over Tottenham new housing developments are springing up, with the cheapest properties, one-bedroom flats, starting at £250,000. These homes are well beyond the reach of local residents. In fact, many will never become secure homes. They will be sources of unearned income for grasping, greedy landlords whilst insecure tenants worry about their future.

The regulations regarding housing development on former public land are quite explicit. The Greater London Authority (GLA) suggests a minimum of 50% should be affordable and/or social housing for rent. Haringey Council approved a plan with just 14% affordable housing of which 30% will be socially rented - 20 homes out of 470. Reasoned objections were brushed aside and our elected representatives were, once again, found to be in the pocket of corporate interests.

Well, even if the battle over planning

permission has been lost, the war is not over. Behind the scenes a local group, the Mary-Ann Johnson Housing Cooperative, successfully applied for the listing of the site as an asset of community value. This means that in the face of greedy, private developers submitting their bids, the community, you and I, have won the right to submit a bid. We will be given additional time to prepare a bid as well as access to funds to cover the considerable costs of architectural, legal and other services.

The housing cooperative, in partnership with the newly-formed South Tottenham Community Development Trust (STCDT) will be organising a community consultation process which will welcome views and suggestions from anyone and everyone living or working locally. Local residents will now have the opportunity to get involved in developing an alternative plan for the site and we should not pass it up.

Decades of corrupt misrule by self-interested politicians have seen the aspirations of ordinary people crushed leaving many resigned to a sense of helplessness. We have always argued that it doesn't have to be like that and we shouldn't miss this opportunity.

We support the following options for the site. Cooperative housing, where residents can afford to live and take control of their lives. Social housing at truly affordable rents and with secure tenure. Community facilities which meet the needs of the elderly, the young, families and marginalised groups. Facilities to enhance the life experiences of those with physical and mental health difficulties..... and more.

We support publicising the consultation process as widely as possible and everyone is welcome to help with that. The more community engagement there is, the better any alternative plan for the site will be.

towards 'economic migrants' and plans to return them to their country of origin. This is absurd - they are coming to Europe because there is no safe place for them to be where they came from. Economic migration is a fact of life - everyone in Britain is probably descended from someone who came to this country to better their lives and we depend on immigration to keep our vital public services working.

Britain's stance is even tougher. Despite claims to have returned to 'compassionate conservatism' Theresa May, the Home Secretary, has revealed the true nature of the Tories as the Nasty Party. Mention the phrases 'asylum seekers' and 'economic migrants' and she pulls the drawbridge up even further. Not only does she refuse to accept any part of the EU proposals but has sent warships to the Med to destroy any boats being used to carry people to Europe. This is no solution for the migrants - they will be forced to find even more dangerous ways to make the journey and many more will die in the process.

And let's not forget Britain's role in this - from the legacy of oppressive colonialisation, the illegal war in Iraq and bombing in Libya and Syria. Surely Britain must accept some responsibility?

This life threatening migration isn't going to end any time soon. The response should focus on human rights and asylum and not the 'keep 'em out approach' that has cost so many lives and caused so much suffering.

A WOLF IN LAMMY'S CLOTHING

It was no great surprise to see David Lammy returned as MP for Tottenham. However, the first year of his tenure will be wasted competing in this year's 'Which Blair Project' - campaigning for the Labour candidacy for London Mayor. Lammy's campaign is receiving significant financial backing from US property developers Cain Hoy, who (alongside eyeing up a takeover of Spurs) have in recent years invested over £1bn in the capital, including major gentrification projects.

Given plans for the demolition of council homes in our borough, you must question whether this relationship is likely to benefit the people of Haringey. Many of us already struggle to cope with rising rents as a consequence of creeping gentrification.

Our 'representative' in Parliament has his eyes on a larger prize, and neither he nor his new friends can be trusted to have our interests at heart.

NO WINNERS HERE

On Thursday 7th May 2015, the Conservatives won a 12-seat majority in the House of Commons. Labour won only 232 seats - 99 less than the Conservatives - whilst the Lib Dems were punished for entering into coalition with the Conservatives after the last election; they won just eight seats compared to 57 in 2010.

In Scotland, the Scottish National Party won 56 out of a possible 59 seats, many of which they took from Labour who were seen to have failed Scottish people.

Amongst the huge changes and upheavals brought about by this election, we can come to a number of conclusions. The first is that the Labour Party is dead. It no longer represents the working class of Britain (it hasn't for a very long time) and, as the general election results show, they can no longer win enough votes to command a majority in parliament. Since the days of New Labour, the Labour Party has attempted to win support from several different groups of voters: those in Scotland; the working class in the post-industrial North; and the middle class in the South/South East. Labour's whole election campaign this year attempted to appeal to all of these groups, and as can be seen in the outcome of the election this strategy did not work.

Though it may seem the Conservatives capitalised on Labour's losses, they received only 6.5% more votes than Labour, improving by only 0.8% on their 2010 performance. In simpler terms, they won a clear majority in parliament with just a minuscule improvement on their 2010 result.

What's more, only 24% of those eligible to vote actually voted for the Conservatives; they are now governing with the approval of less than one quarter of the population. They have no mandate to enact harsh austerity, and so we must fight back.

In fact, the whole election was fought by all the main parties accepting the 'need' for austerity. The Conservatives, Labour, the Lib Dems and (despite their anti-austerity rhetoric) the SNP all outlined plans for austerity in their manifestoes. Those who oppose austerity, many of whom have been affected badly by it, had no voice.

A majority Conservative government was the worst possible outcome of this election, but it must be remembered that all major parties were wedded to cutbacks and austerity. We must continue to fight back against this savage ideological agenda and stop the government's attack on the working class.

FREE SHILAN OZCELIK

On 16th January 2015, 18 year-old Shilan Ozcelik was arrested at Stansted Airport on suspicion of travelling to northern Syria to support the YPJ (Kurdish Women's Defense Units) in their fight against ISIS.

That same month, Kurdish fighters liberated Kobane from the hands of ISIS, for which the international community applauded them.

Why such a contradiction? The British state warns us of the threat posed by ISIS yet, at the same time, is criminalising Ozcelik for wanting to provide humanitarian aid to those on the frontline against ISIS. This contradiction is explained by the West's fear of the PKK and of Kurdish empowerment. However, the YPJ is not listed as a terrorist organisation by the British government, further challenging the decision to charge Ozcelik under the 2006 Terrorism Act.

On 1st April, at an Old Bailey court hearing, Shilan Ozcelik was refused bail and told she will remain in Holloway Prison until a full hearing on 7th September.

Ozcelik's aim was to aid the Kurds in their defence against ISIS. As friends and family of Ozcelik have argued, she poses no threat to the British state, so why has she been imprisoned?

It is crucial we do all we can to challenge Ozcelik's imprisonment and ensure she is released safely. Support the campaign for her release by getting involved with the Peace in Kurdistan Campaign, or write to Shilan via her solicitor at: Av. Ali Has, Morgan Has Solicitors, 1st & 2nd Floor Bank Chambers, 133 Stoke Newington High Street, London N16 0PH

KEEP VOLUNTEERING VOLUNTARY

For five long years a top priority of the previous government was to humiliate, demonise and punish those on benefits. A major target was the unemployed, simply because they were unemployed and unfortunate enough to have no other source of income. Over those years, workfare schemes, where the unemployed are forced to work for their benefits, have become increasingly vicious. Following the election, that ain't about to change.

Currently, tens of thousands have been forced on to the hated Community Work Placement scheme. Regardless of their physical or mental well-being and skills, claimants are forced to work for 30 hours a week for 6 months, most commonly in a charity shop. Any objection, questioning or the slightest stepping out of line may result in sanctions: the stopping of benefits for a minimum of 3 weeks.

Haringey Solidarity Group has been working in solidarity with our unemployed brothers and sisters for

months and campaigning against this particular scheme. G4S, the greedy bastards who grab huge government grants and promptly fiddle as much as they can, run the scheme across much of the country. In Haringey they sub-contract it out to a firm called Urban Futures. We have been at the gates of this company weekly offering our support to claimants on the scheme. Frequently they have reported bullying and abusive tactics used by Urban Futures staff to whip claimants into line. Those tactics appear to have softened since we occupied their offices last year. (View on HSG website: haringey.org.uk)

Our main focus is on those charities which use the 6-month workfare placements. It seems quite bizarre to us that charities established to help those in need should then exploit the unemployed, who under the frequently-used sanctions regime, often end up destitute and dependent upon foodbanks. Our activities outside Traid in Wood Green quickly encouraged them to

leave the scheme. And on discovering a Marie Curie shop using the scheme, a few phone calls around their senior management put an end to that. Perhaps the charity with the biggest stake locally is North London Hospice. They have 18 shops across north London and could be using as many as 50 claimants in those shops. We have been picketing them every weekend for months and, after discussions with the charity's executives, we find we are having an impact as they are promising to leave the scheme.

We all know that the government will continue their vindictive tactics as if the unemployed were to blame for the failings of capitalism, rather than being the victims. We need to stand together and defend each other. Our campaign can and does make a difference. If we can put enough pressure on these charities to force them to pull out, the scheme will collapse. Why not join us? Sticking it to the government and its hated workfare schemes is not only good fun - it's good for us all.



HOUSING - BUT NOT FOR ALL LET'S LYNCH THE LANDLORDS

Haringey Council plan to build 10,000 new homes over the next 15 years to meet demands set down by the Mayor of London. You might think that's a good thing, but the devil is in the detail. One area of redevelopment stretches from Love Lane to Tottenham Hale as part of the Tottenham Area Action Plan.

Although the council denies that their plans will lead to social cleansing, all the evidence points to exactly that conclusion.

The plans include homes for sale on the private market, shared ownership and intermediate housing for rent which for many local people is simply unaffordable.

Where is the much needed council housing?

Private sector rents are sky high and rising, and will inevitably lead to people trying to find cheaper accommodation outside the borough. An initial demolition notice has been served on the Love Lane estate where 297 homes are under threat.

1200 new homes are planned on this site and the 212 existing council tenants have been assured they will be housed on the site if they wish. But there doesn't appear to be any provision of council housing for those on the list who have been waiting for years in temporary accommodation.

Those who bought their home under the right to buy scheme will be paid the market rate plus ten percent. More than likely this will mean they will be unable to afford to buy a suitable property in the area.

The blot on the landscape that is Hale Village - next to Lea Valley - is planned to be extended. The ill thought out plans will again provide housing that will financially exclude many local people while making property speculators rich. It will further spoil an area of natural beauty.

Unhappy about the plans for your area? Then get involved and make your voice heard. Visit the Our Tottenham website: www.ourtottenham.org.uk

We are in the midst of a housing crisis that is seeing many Londoners being forced out of the capital due to rising costs and reduced benefits, while those who remain have to put up with poor conditions and a lack of security. But in Haringey and all across the city, residents are responding by organising housing groups to support each other, oppose the social cleansing of our communities and make housing about need not profit.

Whether it be estate demolitions, dodgy private landlords or the council failing to house people properly, these problems are happening in every London borough and need a city-wide response. If we don't want to see a city only for the rich, we need to support campaigns wherever they appear.

If you're interested in starting to change our crazy housing market, there will likely be a group wherever

you live. See details below for how to get involved, but this list is just for starters and doesn't include many of the estate-specific campaigns that are taking place across London.

Haringey Housing Action Group
haringeyhousingaction.org.uk

Radical Housing Network (cross-London)
radicalhousingnetwork.org

Hackney DIGs
hackneyrenters.org

Housing Action Southwark and Lambeth (HASL)
housingactionsouthwarkandlambeth.wordpress.com

Camden Resists
camdenresists.wordpress.com

Tower Hamlets Renters
towerhamletsrenters.wordpress.com

Focus E15 (Newham)
focus15.org